

# INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY USSR (Krasnoyarsk Kray, Komi ASSR)

REPORT

SUBJECT

1. Kraslag Concentration Camp No. 9

DATE DISTR.

24 JUL 1959

2. Ustvymlag Labor Camps, (railroad +

NO. PAGES

1

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highway bridges, railway  
stations, commercial  
airports in vicinity

REFERENCES

DATE OF  
INFO.PLACE &  
DATE ACQ.

SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE

Two reports on Soviet concentration and labor camps

Attachment 1

is a three-page

report on Kraslag

Concentration Camp No. 9, about 150 kilometers from Kansk (N 56-13, E 95-41), in Krasnoyarsk Kray. Included are general information on camp life, sketch of the camp, and legend for same. Attachment 2 is a fifteen-page report on the Ustvymlag Labor Camps in the Zheleznodorozhnyy (N 62-35, E 50-52) district of the Komi ASSR. The report describes the twenty-one camps and their locations and inhabitants. It also gives information on local transportation, economic affairs, security, and living conditions. The report includes a layout of the Ustvymlag Camp headquarters and installations located in the town of Vozhayel, and a legend for same. Attached is an oversized map showing the locations of the various camps.

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-2-

in sports activities only in the summer, getting workouts on the trapeze, hammer throwing, and basketball. Moving pictures, shown twice a week, were either comedies or dealt with subjects such as "The evolution of the kolkhoz system". At irregular intervals a lecturer spoke on politics. The camp also had a library

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-3-

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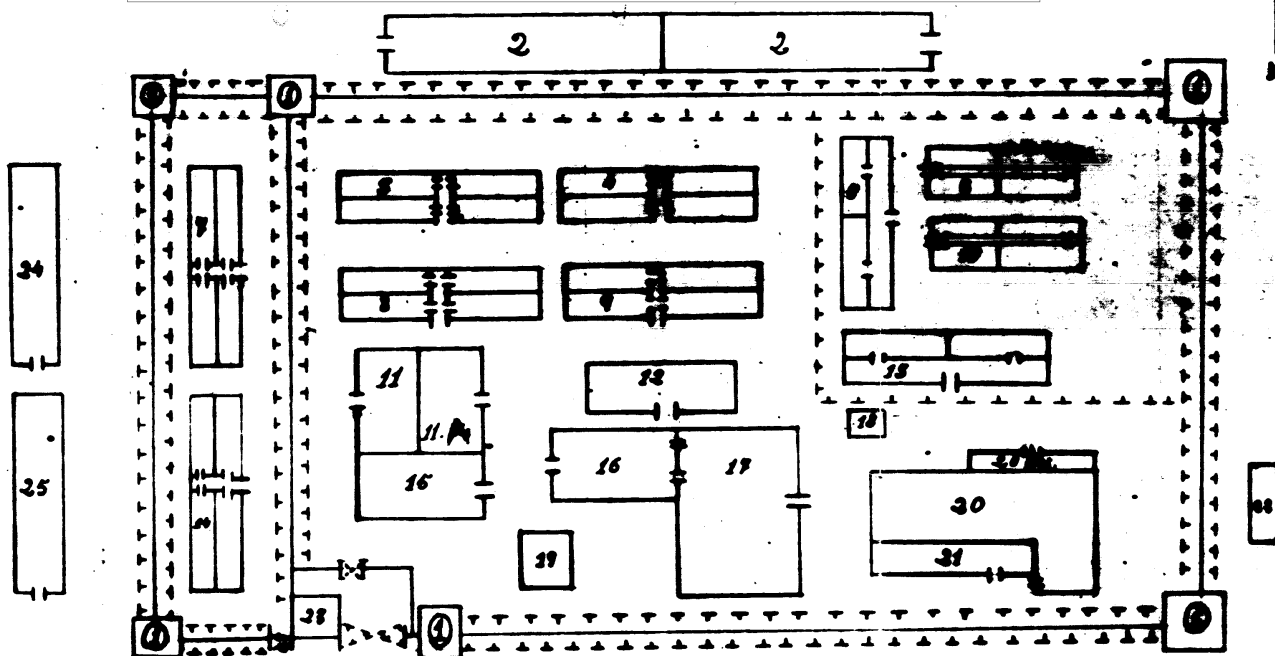
Legend for Sketch of the Kras-Lag Concentration Camp No. 9

1. Guard towers equipped with searchlights
2. Stable
3. Barracks for prisoners
4. Barracks for prisoners
5. Jail
6. Jail
7. Barracks for prisoners who were accorded special privileges
8. Barracks for prisoners
9. Barracks for prisoners
10. Jails
11. Quarters for the camp inspector
- 11a. Commander's office
12. Infirmary
13. Jails
14. Barracks for prisoners who were accorded special privileges
15. Library
16. Kitchen
17. Dining hall
18. Well
19. Well
20. Bathhouse
- 20a. Heating unit
21. Laundry
22. Mobile electric generator
23. Entry and exit control post
24. MVD barracks
25. MVD barracks

Attachment 1

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Attachment 2

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- 11 -

50X1-HUM

Layout of Ustim Lag Camps' Headquarters and Installations in Town of Vozhael.

28. Following is the legend to  sketch on page 15. The numbers in parentheses are keyed to those on the sketch.

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- (1) Veslyana River.
- (2) Electric powerhouse.
- (3) Dirt roads.
- (4) Communal housing for camp personnel; located about 900 meters from the airfield.
- (5) Airfield a) hangars. b) observatory.
- (6) Communal housing.
- (7) Communal housing.
- (8) Communal housing.
- (9) Shooting range.
- (10) Communal housing.
- (11) Club and town movie house.
- (12) Communal housing.
- (13) Communal housing.
- (14) Communal housing.
- (15) Firehouse.
- (16) Central offices of the Ustim Lag camps.
- (17) Communal housing.
- (18) Communal housing.
- (19) Electric powerhouse.
- (20) Communal housing.
- (21) Kitchen gardens.
- (22) Camps No.'s 8 and 8 bis.
- (23) Communal housing.
- (24) Communal housing.
- (25) Pine forests.
- (26) Communal housing.
- (27) Communal housing.
- (28) Agricultural products warehouse.

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*Attachment 2*

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- 12 -

- (29) Communal housing.
- (30) Water pump.
- (31) Hothouse.
- (32) Militia barracks.
- (33) Wood products factory.
- (34) Communal housing.
- (35) General warehouse.
- (36) Botanical nurseries.
- (37) General warehouse.
- (38) Tool shed for Camps No.'s 8 and 8 bis.
- (39) Electric powerhouse.
- (40) Baths.
- (41) Baths.
- (42) Kennels.
- (43) Soldiers' barracks.
- (44) Powder magazine.
- (45) Kennels.
- (46) Communal housing.


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- 13 -

Layout of Ustim Lag Labor Camps and Installations in Komi, ASSR.

29. Following is the legend to  sketch of the above, attached to the end of this report as an oversized enclosure. The numbers in parentheses are keyed to those on the sketch.

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- (1) Pechora-Kotlas railroad.
- (2) Railroad station.
- (3) Veslyana station.
- (4) Staging camp.
- (5) Tractor and truck plant [sic] and sawmill producing planks and wood for chairs and tables.
- (6) Camp No. 4.
- (7) Camp No. 5.
- (8) Electric powerhouse.
- (9) Camp No. 8 bis.
- (10) Airfield.
- (11) Camp No. 3.
- (12) Bridge over the road leading to the camps.
- (13) Bridge over the road leading to the camps.
- (14) Airfield.
- (15) Wood products plant.
- (16) Camp No. 8.
- (17) Stables for horses and oxen.
- (18) Central offices of the Ustim Lag Camps.
- (19) Town of Vozhael.
- (20) Electric powerhouse.
- (21) Tractor and truck repair shops.
- (22) Electric powerhouse.
- (23) Veslyana River.
- (24) Camp No. 17.
- (25) Camp No. 20.
- (26) Railroad station in Zheleznodorzhnyy.

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- 14 -

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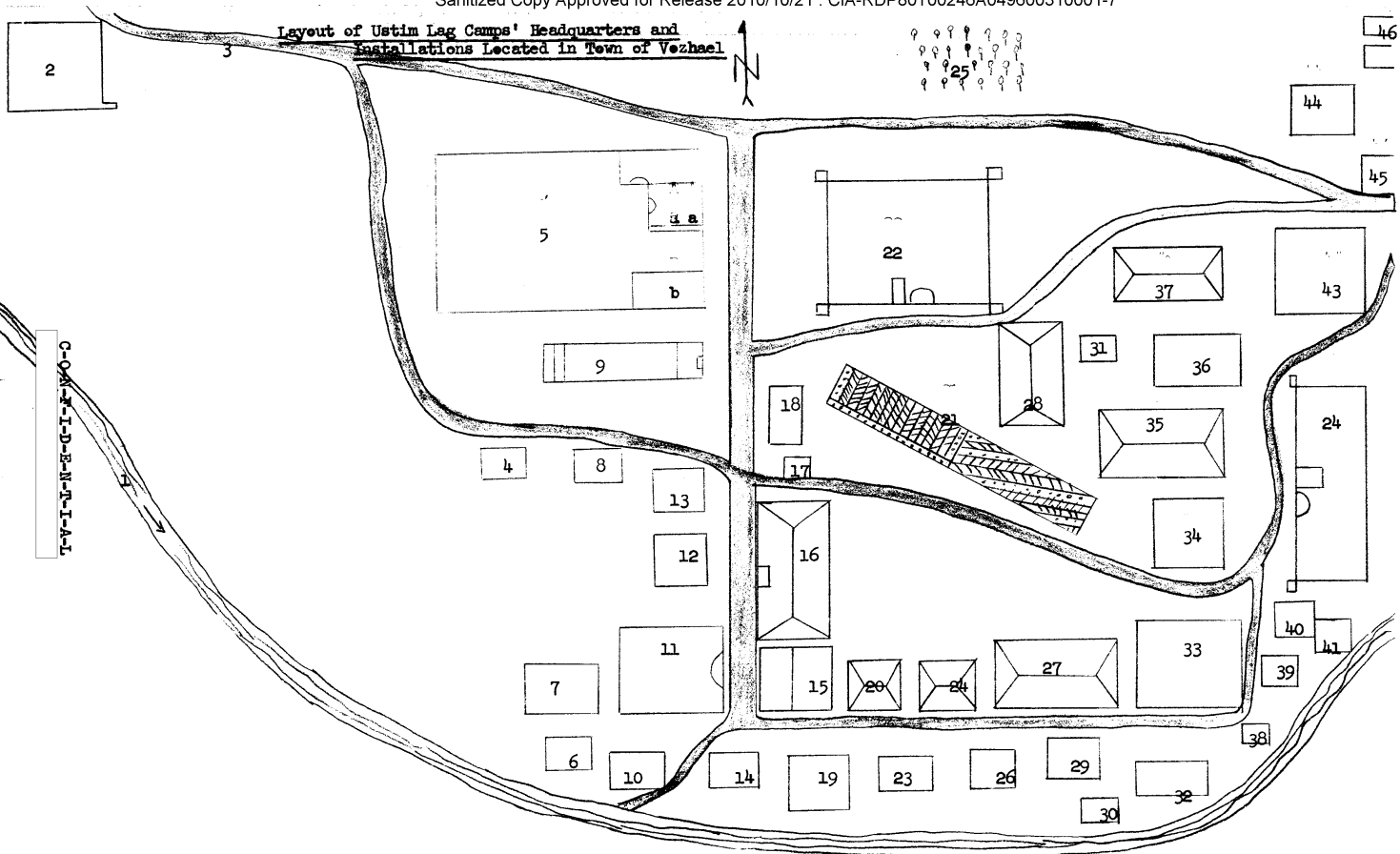
- (27) Electric powerhouse.
- (28) Town of Zheleznoderezhnyy.
- (29) Airfield.
- (30) Bridge over the road leading to the camps.
- (31) Six lifts for hauling logs from the Veslyana River.
- (32) Wood products plant.
- (33) Camp No. 3 bis.
- (34) Bridge over the road leading to the camps.
- (35) Electric powerhouse.
- (36) Camp No. 21.
- (37) Camp No. 14 (disciplinary camp).
- (38) Cultivated area.
- (39) Camp No. 1.
- (40) Town of Veslyana.
- (41) Camp No. 2.
- (42) City of Syktyvkar.<sup>1</sup>
- (43) Electric powerhouse.
- (44) Airfield.

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Layout of Ustim Lag Camps' Headquarters and  
Installations Located in Town of Vezhael



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- 15 -

Attachment 3

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- 2 -

## USTIM LAG LABOR CAMPS

General Information

1. "Ustim Lag" was the name given to the area of about 250 square kilometers comprised of 13 labor camps in the Zheleznodorozhnyy (N 62-35, E 50-52) district of the Komi ASSR. Following is a list of the camps comprising Ustim Lag and their locations. Some towns located near the camps were known only by the camp numbers.
  - a. Staging Camp, located 50 kilometers northwest of Veslyana (N 63-01, E 50-51) and 14 kilometers from Camp No. 8.
  - b. Camp No. 1, located 1,500 meters west of Veslyana.
  - c. Camp No. 2, located 6 kilometers east of Veslyana.
  - d. Camp No. 3, located 24 kilometers from, and slightly northwest, of Veslyana.
  - e. Camp No. 3 bis, located 12 kilometers northwest of Veslyana.
  - f. Camp No. 4, located 25 kilometers north of Veslyana.
  - g. Camp No. 5, located 25 meters to the south of the Staging Camp.
  - h. Camp No. 8, located 32 kilometers northwest of Veslyana.
  - i. Camp No. 8 bis, located 500 meters northwest of the Staging Camp.
  - j. Camp No. 14, located 20 kilometers northwest of Veslyana.
  - k. Camp No. 17, located 20 kilometers north of Veslyana.
  - l. Camp No. 20, located 100 kilometers northwest of Veslyana.
  - m. Camp No. 21, located 106 kilometers northwest of Veslyana.

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3. In general, the terrain was flat with gentle undulations. There were many swamps and extensive pine and birch forests; vegetation was very dense. The Veslyana Reka was the principal river in the area. It flowed southward and, in spite of the fact that it was about 35 meters wide and three meters deep, it was not navigable except from Zheleznodorozhnyy on, where it became wider and was navigable by small boats carrying a maximum of 15 persons. From October to April, the river was frozen, sometimes to a depth of two meters. Small trucks

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- 3 -

weighing up to 1,500 kilograms and using chains drove on the frozen river. The course of the Veslyana River, in relation to the Ustim Lag Camps, was plotted as follows:

- a. 9 kilometers west of the Staging Camp.
- b. 1,500 meters east of Camp No. 1.
- c. 6 kilometers west of Camp No. 2.
- d. 7 kilometers east of Camp No. 3.
- e. 5 kilometers east of Camp No. 3 bis.
- f. 1,000 meters from Camp No. 4.
- g. 9 kilometers west of Camp No. 5.
- h. 1,200 meters from Camp No. 8.
- i. 6 meters south of Camp No. 8 bis.
- j. 14 kilometers west of Camp No. 14.
- k. 400 meters east of Camp No. 17.
- l. 900 meters west of Camp No. 20.
- m. 800 meters west of Camp No. 21.

From April to September, logs were transported on the river to Camps Nos. 20 and 21. There were some unimportant small rivers in the area, especially in the spring; none was as much as four meters wide. No important bridge crossed the Veslyana River or any of the small rivers.

#### Climate

4. The climatic conditions for the four seasons were as follows.
  - a. Spring, April to June: gentle, rather damp, south winds, thunderstorms lasting from three to six days, good weather; maximum temperature 15° C., minimum 3° C., and mean 10° C.
  - b. Summer, June to September: very gentle south winds alternating with somewhat stronger north winds, severe thunderstorms changing into gentle rain that lasted up to a week, very good weather; maximum temperature 35° C., minimum 10° C., and mean 25° C.
  - c. Autumn, September to November: strong, cold, wet winds with snow- and hailstorms, severe thunderstorms; maximum temperature 15° C., minimum 0° C., and mean 8° C.
  - d. Winter, beginning in November and lasting until April: cold winds of hurricane force with very severe snow storms lasting up to eight days, continuous sub-zero weather; maximum temperature 10° below zero, minimum 60° below zero, and mean 30° below zero.

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- 4 -

Demography

5. Following is the demography of the Ustim Lag camps:

a. The Staging Camp had a maximum of about 60 prisoners because it was the point from which prisoners were sent to the different Ustim Lag camps. The Staging Camp was guarded by the same men guarding camp No. 5. The guards consisted of about 60 soldiers, five officers, and a number of non-commissioned officers, all of whom were under the MVD.

b. Camp No. 1 was the largest in the area and had at least 700 ordinary prisoners, among whom were Chinese, Germans, [redacted] No distinctions based on religion or reason for imprisonment were made. [redacted]

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c. Camp No. 2 had about 300 women prisoners, both political and ordinary, among whom were Poles, Germans, [redacted] No distinctions were made [redacted]

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d. Camp No. 3 was used only in winter; in summer it was inhabitable because of illnesses induced by the proximity of the many swamps. Prisoners were transferred to Camp No. 3 bis. It was guarded by 30 soldiers, a first lieutenant, a sergeant, and several corporals, all subordinate to the MVD.

e. Camp No. 3 bis was used only as a summer camp for prisoners from Camp No. 3 and had the same guards.

f. Camp No. 4 had about 400 prisoners, including 25 Germans, ten Poles, [redacted] Political and ordinary prisoners were mixed without distinction as to nationality, religion, or reason for imprisonment. This camp was guarded by about 30 soldiers, two officers, and some non-commissioned officers, all of whom were subordinate to the MVD. Before 1950 one soldier escorted a group of 30 prisoners to work; after that time two soldiers were used for the same number of prisoners.

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g. Camp No. 5 had about 200 prisoners, among whom were Germans, Poles, Rumanians, [redacted] Political and ordinary prisoners were mixed without distinction as to nationality, religion, or reason for imprisonment. Camp No. 5 was guarded by the same forces as the Staging Camp (see 5a above).

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h. Camp No. 8 had about 250 prisoners, among whom were eight Germans, seven Poles, [redacted] There were 40 political prisoners who lived with the other prisoners without any distinction. Camp No. 8 was guarded by about 50 soldiers, a major, a captain, two lieutenants, and various non-commissioned officers, all of whom were subordinate to the MVD. In 1950 the number of soldiers and officers were doubled.

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i. Camp No. 8 bis was a women's camp known as "Mothers' Camp" although it contained some single women; most of the women were pregnant or had small children. There were about 250 political and ordinary prisoners living together without any distinction; among these were 40 Germans, five Poles, [redacted]

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- 5 -

- j. Camp No. 14 was the disciplinary camp for the entire Ustim Lag area.

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- k. Camp No. 17 had about 350 prisoners, among whom were ten Germans, two Rumanians. No distinctions were made between the group of 150 political prisoners and the other prisoners.

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- l. Camp No. 20 had about 700 prisoners, among whom were about 40 Germans, two Rumanians. It was guarded by about 80 soldiers, a major, two captains, three lieutenants, and several non-commissioned officers, all under the MVD.

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- m. Camp No. 21 had about 600 political prisoners which included Germans, Poles, Rumanians, and Soviets of various nationalities. This camp was guarded by the same forces as those guarding Camp No. 20.

#### Housing and Construction

6. All the buildings in the Ustim Lag camps were built of pine logs, thus utilizing the numerous wood products industries and extensive forests in the area. Camp personnel and their families, families of MVD soldiers, and prisoners working in the wood products industries lived in the towns. All these houses were also built of wood.

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It was rumored that a factory was to be built in Zheleznodorozhnyy

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#### Water

7. There were no water tanks or purifying apparatus in any of the camps. Drinking water came from the Veslyana River and was transported in 400-liter wooden barrels on horse-drawn carts. In some camps, a small three-or four-horsepower pump was used to draw river water, although in most camps buckets were used. Sanitary water came from artesian wells; this water was not potable because the wells were in swampy areas.

#### Electricity

8. All the Ustim Lag camps had 220-volt alternating electric current. Each barracks usually had two 75-watt bulbs. Only Camps Nos. 2, 3, 3 bis, and 14 used petroleum lamps. Electric power consumed came from the following powerhouses, whose capacities were described in horsepower not further specified:

- a. A 200-horsepower electric powerhouse, in which ten prisoners worked under the supervision of a camp employee, was located about 150 meters north of Camp No. 4. All the machinery was of Soviet make. The powerhouse supplied electricity to Camp No. 4, to a furniture plant, and to the garage.
- b. A 250-horsepower electric powerhouse, located about 700 meters from Camps Nos. 8 and 8 bis, next to the Vozhael, supplied electricity to these two camps and to Vozhael. It had two Soviet-made 175-horsepower boilers operating on eight-hour shifts 24 hours a day and two alternating current generators. Seven Soviet prisoners worked under the supervision of a camp employee.

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- 6 -

- c. A powerhouse, supplying electricity to the Veslyana railroad station, the Staging Camp, Camp No. 5, and two or three power saws, was located about one kilometer south of Veslyana.

All the machinery in this powerhouse was of Soviet make.

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- d. A 350-horsepower powerhouse, supplying electricity to Camp No. 17, town No. 17, and to the main tractor and truck repair shops, was located about one kilometer to the east of Camp No. 17. This powerhouse had a somewhat greater capacity than those already described and was built entirely of Soviet materiel. A total of 14 prisoners and camp employees worked at the powerhouse.

- e. There were two electric powerhouses about 500 meters apart, located two kilometers to the west of Zheleznodorozhnyy. One of these, described as of 500 horsepower, was built entirely of Soviet materials. The other, described as of 1,500 horsepower, and constructed in 1951 because of the increase of work in the shops, was built by Soviet technicians of German materials. These two powerhouses supplied electricity to a railroad tie plant, to Zheleznodorozhnyy, to Camp Nos. 20 and 21, and to six hoists hauling logs from the Veslyana River.

- f. An electric powerhouse installed near Camp No. 1 supplied electricity to the town of Veslyana, to Camp No. 1, and to a repair shop.

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#### Refuse

9. Camp waste was thrown into the swamps, burned, buried in deep holes, or thrown into the river.

#### Communications

10. All Ustim Lag camps had a small telephone exchange to communicate with the area center.

11. There was a highway running from Kotlas (N 61-16, E 46-35); it was cobble-stoned, without shoulders, about ten meters wide, and in good condition. There was a distance marker every kilometer, and traffic signs at the forks. This highway was built to the east of the Kotlas-Verkuta (N 67-30, E 64-00) railroad line, to which it ran nearly parallel as far as the Veslyana station, and it passed through Zheleznodorozhnyy.

The highway, open to traffic throughout the year, was almost straight with no closed curves.

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12. A dirt road passed through the following points: Veslyana, Camp No. 3, Camp No. 17, Camp No. 4, Camp No. 8, Camp No. 8 bis, and the Veslyana station, where it ended upon joining the Kotlas-Verkuta highway. It was six or eight meters wide and full of holes. Trucks, tractors, and carts using the road could pass one another only at special places about 25 meters long where the road had been divided into two lanes, the second of which was about six meters wide and was usually surfaced with logs so that the vehicles would not sink into the marshy ground. There was a distance marker every kilometer. At each road leading to a camp, there was a sign giving the distance to the camp or camps. This

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- 7 -

highway became impassable on occasion in winter because of snow storms, but snowplows soon opened the highway to traffic again. Several dirt roads ran into the dirt road that went from Veslyana to Veslyana station, forming a network that connected the labor camps with one another.

13. The most important bridges in the area were the following.

a. Four wooden bridges built of pine logs over depressions or hollows on the dirt road leading from Veslyana to Veslyana station; these four bridges were suitable for use by small trucks and had the following dimensions and locations.

- (1) 20 meters long by seven or eight meters wide, located 500 meters south of Camp No. 17.
- (2) 30 meters long by seven or eight meters wide, located about two kilometers north of Camp No. 3 bis.
- (3) 35 meters long by seven or eight meters wide, located about two kilometers south of Camp No. 4.
- (4) 15 meters long by eight meters wide, located about 5,500 meters west of Camp No. 9 bis.

b. Two steel and concrete bridges capable of supporting great weights, as follows:

- (1) Railroad bridge 12 meters long, seven meters wide, and ten meters high, built on the Kotlas-Verkuta line about one kilometer south of the Veslyana station.
- (2) Bridge about 45 meters long, seven meters wide, and 20 meters high, with two arches; this bridge was built over a small river, about three kilometers north of Zheleznoderezhnyy.

14. The Kotlas-Verkuta railroad line was the only one in the area. From Kotlas to Zheleznoderezhnyy, the railroad had a double track of normal width, but from Zheleznoderezhnyy to the Veslyana station, the railroad had only a single track of normal width.

a double track was being built from Pechora (N 65-25, E 57-00). Trains using this line stopped at Camps No. 5, 20, 21, and the Staging Camp. There were two or three passenger trains daily in each direction. freight trains transported lumber and logs from the area to Arkhangelsk (N 64-34, E 40-32) and other cities of the USSR.

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15. There were only two railroad stations. The Zheleznoderezhnyy station was in the town of the same name, about one kilometer from Camps Nos. 20 and 21. It had two two-story brick buildings, each about 40 meters long. It had more than four sidings and supported very heavy freight traffic in logs and lumber from the plants. The Veslyana station was located next to the town of the same name, about one kilometer south of the Staging Camp and Camp No. 5. It had one one-story building about 25 meters long. Some of its sidings were used for the unloading of goods for the Ustima Lag camps, except Camps Nos. 20 and 21.

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- 8 -

16. A civilian airport was located about 500 meters from Camp No. 8 bis and about 600 meters to the northwest of Vozhael; the airport had no landing strips. It had three sheet-metal hangars, each about 30 or 40 meters long, in which six or seven biplanes of undetermined type were kept. From one to three planes took off every day. Next to the hangars was a two-story wooden building housing the meteorological observatory and the radio station. The land bordering the highway had a 1.5-meter-high fence. There was a sign reading "entrance forbidden" at the gate, next to the guard post manned by MVD soldiers. The airport was guarded by the same soldiers that guarded Camps Nos. 8 and 8 bis.
17. Another civilian airport was located about two kilometers east of the Veslyana station. There were also two airports located about two kilometers east of Zheleznoderezhnyy and on the outskirts of Syktyvkar (N 61-40, E 50-51).<sup>1</sup>

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Vehicles Used for Transport

18. Small gasoline or gas trucks were used to transport goods between the various camps; some of these trucks had a trailer and transported as many as 17 cubic meters of lumber. Also, four-wheeled carts drawn by horses or oxen were used to supply the camps. During the winter, when the highways were blocked by snow, aluminum motor-driven sleds were used.

Security

19. Following are the public security organizations which were located in Vozhael.

- a. Militia headquarters, located on Lenin Street [redacted] The barracks was a one-story wooden building about 20 meters long and eight meters wide, divided into four rooms, the jail, office, waiting room, and a room for emergency troops. Seven policemen were under the orders of a lieutenant. [redacted] they were under the jurisdiction of MGB. They were in charge of keeping order in Vozhael, Zimka, and the towns of Camps No. 3, 3 bis, and 17.
- b. Firehouse on Zaretskie Street [redacted] This was a two-story wooden building about 20 meters long by 12 meters wide. The first floor housed the fire engines; the firemen, headed by a captain and a lieutenant, lived on the second floor. [redacted] they were under the MVD. They fought fires and floods that might occur in Zimka, Vozhael, and in the towns of Camps Nos. 3, 3 bis, and 17.

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- c. The central offices for all the Ustim Lag camps were located on Lenin Street; [redacted] They were contained in a two-story wooden building about 35 meters long by 15 meters high, that housed about 100 persons, both military and civilian, all MVD personnel, headed by a colonel.

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20. There were both city police barracks and firehouse at the Veslyana station and in Zheleznoderezhnyy; [redacted]

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- 9 -

21. Ustim Lag prisoners received no instruction related to civil defense.

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22.

All camps were guarded by MVD troops, who wore khaki uniforms and caps and high leather boots. They were foot soldiers, armed with a carbine-type rifle having a clip of five bullets, although sometimes they carried a 32 or 42 round drum-type submachine gun. Two soldiers were assigned to guard each work brigade of from 20 to 50 prisoners.

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#### Economy

23. Pine forests constituted the area's principal resource. Potatoes, beets for livestock, onions, garlic, cucumbers, hothouse tomatoes, rye, oats, and wheat were cultivated, all in small quantities except rye. In general, the food products consumed in the area were of low quality and most were imported from other cities of the USSR. Prisoners received sufficient food to live on; the food ration consisted of cooked vegetables such as dried potatoes, salt cabbage, carrots, onions, garlic, cucumbers, beet greens, and a kind of white tuber, as well as ground oats, ground wheat, rice, and a yellowish seed. Prisoners had to pay for their own food, and the camp administration deducted 240 rubles monthly from each prisoner. There was no black market in the area.

#### Prison Labor

24. Prisoners worked mainly as lumbermen cutting down trees, in wood products factories, repairing cars, and at agricultural tasks. The breakdown was as follows: lumbermen, 70 percent; machine shops and wood industries, 20 percent; and agricultural and other tasks, 10 percent. In 1952, all prisoners began to receive a wage based on the work performed; some prisoners earned as much as from 200 to 500 rubles monthly after deductions for food, clothing, and the State Loan (Zayem).

#### Sanitation and Health

25. All Ustim Lag camps had a small hospital with a maximum of 30 beds; each hospital was attended by three doctors, two of whom were prisoners, and two or three nurses, generally women prisoners. The Veslyana station had a central hospital for patients who needed surgical or special care.

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26. The most common illnesses in the area were the following:

- a. Grippe - Prisoners with grippe were treated with penicillin injections in severe cases but were not excused from work.
- b. Pneumonia - Patients were treated with penicillin and cupping, and admitted to the camp hospital for a period of from ten to 30 days.
- c. Frozen members - Frozen members were treated by applying goose grease and covering them with a bandage; the person affected was hospitalized for from five to 15 days. If the frozen area was very extensive, the patient was sent to the central hospital at Veslyana station for surgery.

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- 10 -

d. Jaundice - Prisoners suffering from jaundice were put on a non-fat diet and were sent to the camp hospital for from ten to 30 days.

e. Stomatitis - Prisoners suffering from stomatitis were put on a fruit and vegetable diet heavy in garlic and onions, and were given vitamin injections of an unknown type. If necessary, the patient was admitted to the camp hospital.

f. Malaria - Prisoners with malaria were treated with injections [redacted] and with hard yellow pills somewhat smaller than aspirin, one being taken with each meal. The period of hospitalization depended on the patient's condition.

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g. Dysentery - Dysentery was the most common illness in all of the Ustim Lag camps; [redacted]

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#### Recreation and Sports

27. All Ustim Lag camps had a small library stocked with a few books; a prisoner could take any book to his barracks but had to pay for it if it were lost or damaged. All camps in the area showed a movie once a week in the camp dining room; these were Soviet pictures on varied subjects, except politics. After Stalin's death in 1953, prisoners began to participate voluntarily in sports activities after work. They played six-man handball and football. These games were not organized by the camp management, although some time later competitive games were organized within each camp.

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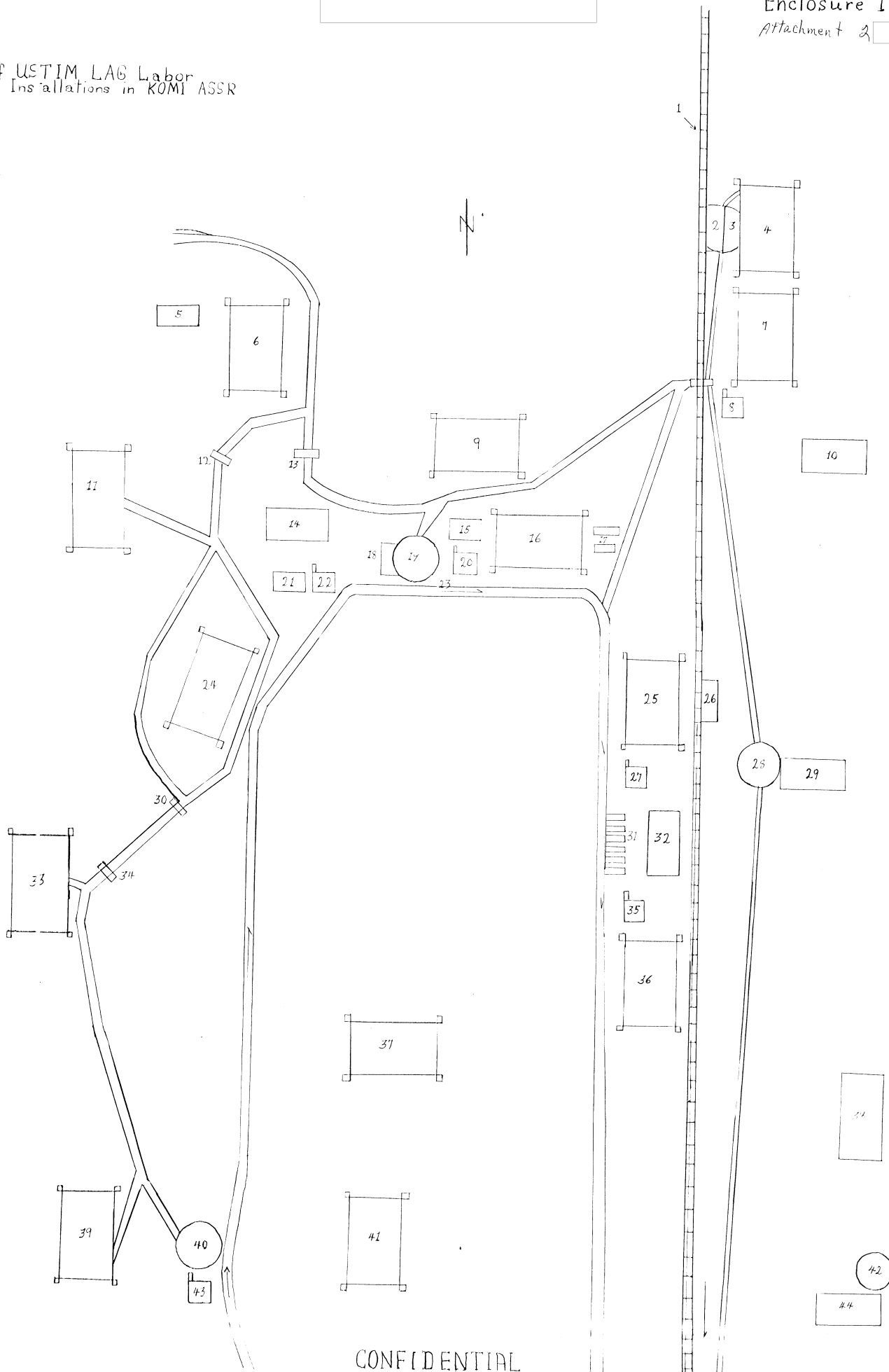
Enclosure 1

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Attachment 2

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Layout of USTIM LAG Labor  
Camps and Installations in KOMI ASSR



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